

# CASTLEMAINE NATURALIST

DECEMBER 1988

141



## ANNUAL FERN

The Annual Fern is an addition to the Castlemaine Plant List. It was found growing inside a mine shaft in Shicer Gully (Tarilta) on 2/11/88 by Ian Higgins.

The fern looks a little like parsley, but the leaves are a yellow green and are delicate. It dies down in dry weather, but comes to life again when the weather is suitable.

Annual fern is said to be widespread, but is often overlooked. It can be found in damp, sheltered positions such as hollow logs, shaded stream banks, caves (and old mine shafts).

It could be worth searching for Annual Fern in some of the damper southern parts of the district.



The Latin name is *Anogramma leptophylla*. The name "anogramma" refers not to an association with crossword puzzles, but rather from the arrangement of spores along the veins and tips of the lobes. (From *ano* = upwards and *gramme* = writing.) *Leptophylla* refers to the slender, thin leaves.

Annual Fern is cosmopolitan. It also occurs in parts of Asia, Africa, Europe and South America.

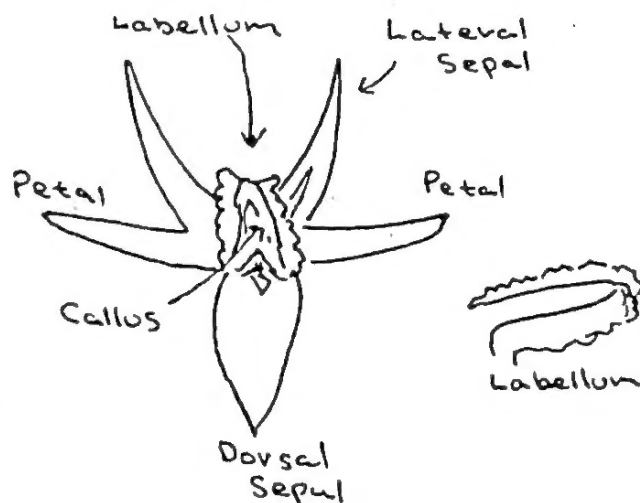
E.P.

# SCENTED LEEK ORCHID

*Prasophyllum odoratum*

Leek Orchids have thrived during 1988, and have been seen in many parts of the local district.

Some of the Leek Orchids growing near Taradale have been identified as the Scented Leek Orchid.



Leek Orchids are a little confusing at first, as they are "upside down" flowers. The dorsal (or rear) sepal is at the front, and so on.

The Leek Orchid most commonly seen in the district is the Broad-lip Leek Orchid. Some of the differences between the two species is given in the table below.

	SCENTED	BROAD-LIP
Labellum	Sharply bent (over 90 degrees)	Curved, not acutely bent
Callus (green centre part of labellum)	Channeled. Extends only slightly past bend	Not channeled. Extends well past the bend
Labellum tip	Protrudes past the lateral sepals	Does not protrude past lateral sepals
Lateral sepals	Divergent. Seldom two-toothed	Almost parallel. Often two toothed.
Edge of labellum	Often white	Seldom pure white

Over the past few years there has been confusion between the two species, and at times the two species have been combined.

In Flora of South Australia, the two are considered to be the one species. *Prasophyllum patens* var *patens* is equivalent to the old *P. odoratum*, and *P. patens* var *pruinsum* to the old *P. patens*.

E.P.

A HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL!



E.P.

# PLANT LIST ADDITIONS

These new records come from a variety of observers.

Smooth rice-flower c, 2-leaf cape tulip c, Cape weed C  
 Showy violet A, Narrow rock-fern C35, Necklace fern C  
 Clustered everlasting C, Tall bluebell C5, Cleavers U  
 Austral indigo C, Yellow pennywort k5, Golden wattle V  
 Golden everlasting C, Cranberry heath k, Blanket fern C  
 Slender sun-orchid C, Annual Veldt grass C, Milkmaids 5  
 Toad rush UV, Slender onion-orchid S, Climbing sundew Q  
 Prickly star-wort C, Scarlet pimpernel CQ, Hop clover 1  
 Common centaury C5, Musky caladenia V35, Angular pea 5  
 Common beard-orchid V235, Thatch saw-sedge V5, Sheep's-  
 burr V, Woodrush (*Luzula meridionalis* var *densiflora*) V  
 Rough bedstraw 5, Tussock grass 5, Common vetch 5, Grey  
 parrot-pea 2, Red-anther Wallaby grass 5, Dense-flowered  
 wood-rush C, Yellow penny-wort V, Wiry buttons 5, Scaly  
 buttons 5, White marianth 5, Many-flowered mat-rush RU  
 Twining fringe-lily U, Greencomb spider-orchid QVU5  
 Grey everlasting 5, Digger's speedwell 5, Common correa 5  
 Tall sundew 5, Billy buttons 5, Hairy centrolepis U  
 Dusty miller 5, Pink Fingers U, Purple beard-orchid U  
 Dwarf aphelia U, Golden moths V, Small pennywort V5,  
 Yellow box VU, Sweet Bursaria 5, Silvery hair-grass 5  
 Blackwood U, Billy buttons R, Wiry buttons R, Wirilda V  
 Austral carrot V5, Blue pincushion 5, Fairy waxflower 5  
 Pink bells 5, Slender buttercup R, Handsome flat-pea 5  
 Candles V5, Mouse-ear chickweed 5, Slender rice-flower 5  
 Kidney Weed UV, Spreading stonecrop V, Bulbine lily V  
 Blunt-leaf bitter-pea 5, Grass trigger-plant 5, Gorse V  
 Variable stink-weed 5, Small poranthera 5, Bear's ear V  
 Grey everlasting 5, Common wedge-pea 5, Early Nancy 5V  
 Hyacinth orchid 3, Tiny flat-sedge U, Musky caladenia Q  
 Variable plantain U, Square cicendia Q1, Rabbit ears Q  
 Red parrot-pea Q, Slender onion-orchid Q, Finger rush U  
 Creeping bossiaea U, Common bog-rush Q, Yellow sebaea Q  
 Salmon sun-orchid 2U, Showy podolepis 35, Onion grass V  
 Hairy stylewort RU, Southern club-rush U, Gnat orchid 1  
 Pointed centrolepis U, Erect chickweed U, Cat's ear V5  
 Common cotula U, Small wrinklewort VU5, Tiny cud-weed V  
 Soft millotia U5, Button everlasting V, Coffee bush VU  
 Yam V5, Variable sword-sedge U, Common onion-orchid C  
 Annual blue-bell V, Smooth cat's ear 3, Capitata rush V  
 Gold-dust wattle U, Joint-leaf rush VU, Woolly wattle U  
 Nodding greenhood Q, White marianth Q, Rayless daisy 5  
 Juncus sp(A) U, Annual bluebell 15, Cut-leaf goodenia 1  
 Sharp buttercup 5, Rayless daisy 5, Rat-tail fescue 5

The Small mat-rush (*Lomandra sororia*) is an addition to the plant list. It grows in the Strathlea forest.

(c=Castlemaine township, C=Chewton/The Monk, 1=Sandon dist, A=Mt Alexander, 3=west Midland Hwy, k=block 35n, U & V=Taradale east, Q=Sandon, 5=south of Castlemaine-Elphinstone Hwy, S=Smiths Reef, 2=west of Tarrengower)

## Snake Tales

Snakes have been in the news quite a bit lately, and many people have an almost unreasoning fear of them. Respect and caution are needed, certainly, but a little wisdom as to their ways helps a lot in allaying normal fears.

An article in the Midland Express, 22/11/88, gives a few general hints for not encouraging snakes to take up residence at your place, and also states the First Aid procedures for snakebite.

I have found over many years of tramping around the local bush, often on my own, that snakes are seldom seen. I have only seen four, all browns, in the bush in that time. Once I was sitting quietly when one came towards me, but it shot off into the undergrowth as soon as I moved my foot. On another occasion one was hastily moving away from under my foot (which I drew back very smartly!). I warned Stan Bruton who was walking next to me that it was coming. Well, I knew Stan was spry, but not that spry!

The next was shedding its skin, and hissed a warning when I was about 30 feet away, so I was able to detour around it.

The first one I saw a number of years ago out at Smiths Reef. It was partly hidden among some sticks and couldn't move or hiss, as it had a mouth full of bullfrog. I was told later by a herpetologist that I could have got a better photo if I'd moved imperceptibly forward and carefully and slowly removed the sticks! Ho! Ho! He did admit that brown snakes are notoriously unpredictable, and if it had noticed the movement it would have spat the frog out and either bitten me or gone for its life! I wouldn't be interested in trying to find out which!

At Mt Buffalo the Red-bellied Black Snake is much more common, and around the camp and along the tracks it wasn't unusual to see one disappearing under a bush only 3 or 4 feet ahead - they seemed to have become quite used to the campers.

We've had snakes around the house, and usually the only way we've known they were still around, if we saw them at all, was by the fact that the mice were being kept down in the guinea pigs cages. They never seemed to touch the guinea pigs.

The Tiger snake is reputed to be aggressive, but I'm not very familiar with them, and I don't think I'll be trying to test their patience.

One statement made in the Express is that "many bites occur when people go out of their way to kill a snake". My information is that it is in the order of around 90

I can understand someone killing a snake which has taken up residence around a house, but it makes no sense whatsoever to kill a snake in the bush or out in the open paddocks where there's a good chance that no one will be even going to see it again, much less stand on it and get bitten.

When all is said and done, it is up to the walker to keep on the alert, avoid walking through grass and scrub where they can't see, and not step over logs without checking first that Joe Blake isn't sunning himself on the other side. He will be just as keen, if not keener, to get out of your way.

The Melbourne Zoo has brochures available, which they will send to anyone who sends a request along with a stamped self-addressed envelope to -

The Royal Zoological Gardens,

P.O. Box 74

Parkville. 3052.

### **BELLS SWAMP EXCURSION**

42 different kinds of birds were seen at Bells Swamp during the Club outing on Nov 12th, 1988. Club observers were helped by visitors from B.O.C. and Mt Martha F.N.C.

Highlight was sighting of the Little Corella. At one stage, Galahs, A Long-billed Corella and two Little Corellas were perched in the same side of the one tree.

The bird list for the excursion was:-

Hoary-headed Grebe	Yellow-billed Spoonbill
Straw-necked Ibis	Sacred Ibis
Coot	Little Pied Cormorant
White-necked Heron	White-faced Heron
Black-fronted Dotterell	Dusky Moor-hen
Swan	Musk Duck
Grey Teal	Hardhead
Masked Lapwing	Whistling Kite
Welcome Swallow	Musk Lorikeet (+ nest)
Red-rump Parrot	Eastern Rosella
Little Corella	Long-billed Corella
Tawny Frogmouth (dec)	Sacred Kingfisher (heard)
Willy Wag-tail	Scissors Grinder
Fairy Martin	Black-faced Cuckoo-shrike
Blue Wren	Reed Warbler (heard)
Red Wattlebird	Fuscous Honeyeater
White-plumed Honeyeater	Mudlark
Sparrow	Little Grass-bird (heard)
Magpie	Dusky Woodswallow
Starlings	Australian? Raven

In addition to these, Brown Falcon, Kookaburra, Pipit, and Yellow-rump Thornbill were seen along the route.

## NOTES FOR NOVEMBER

WHITE WINGED TRILLER has been seen at Wattle Flat by Rita Mills, to make a new record for Wattle Flat. The female Triller is a brownish colour. The male however is a very handsome black and white.

WHITE BROWED SCRUB-WREN and SPOTTED QUAIL-THRUSH were seen at Eureka, also by Rita. The Spotted Quail-thrush is also a new locality record.

CHOUGHS, MAGPIES AND CURRAWONGS. A mixed, and very noisy mixed flock of White-winged Chough, Magpies and Grey Currawongs was seen at Wattle Flat by Rita Mills.

MISTLETOE BIRDS have been seen in Castlemaine North by Rita Mills.

VIOLETS have been seen in some abundance along Salt Water Track (off Old Coach Road, Taradale).

FERN ADDITIONS. Two new fern records for the Plant List have been made by Ian Higgins. Both ferns were in growing in mine shafts, the Annual Fern at Shicer Gully, and Mother Shield Fern at Wattle Gully.

ANGLED LOBELIA, growing at the edge of a water race at Wattle Gully is also a new record for the plant list, and has also been made by Ian Higgins.

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### PLANT LIST ADDITIONS for November

Yellow sebaea D, Annual blue-bell D, Tall bluebell DO  
Bottle Daisy D, Rat-tail fescue D, Fringe myrtle D  
Angular pea D, Sheep's burr D, Narrow-leaf bitter-pea D  
Golden everlasting D, Scented sun-orchid HPCD, Saloop R  
Narrow cicendia C, Twiggy bush-pea C, Tiny flat-sedge C  
Small poranthera C, Salmon sun-orchid CD, Moss Sunray C  
Scaly buttons D, Common beard-orchid D, Wiry buttons D  
Tall sundew H, Scented sundew HP, Ploughshare wattle H  
Small-leaf parrot-pea H, Common raspwort H, Wirilda H  
Grass trigger plant D, Cat's ear D, Musky caladenia D  
Levantine chick weed D, Prickly starwort D, Milkmaids H  
Variable stinkweed D, Rough bedstraw D, Pink fingers HP  
Black-anther flax-lily H, Chocolate lily H, Wax lip P  
Twining fringe-lily H, Musky caladenia H, Shell grass H  
White marianth H, Slender rice-flower H, Tiger Orchid R  
Joint-leaf rush P, Small wrinklewort R, Necklace fern P  
Tall bluebell P, Hairy stylewort P, Shining pennywort P  
Ivy-leaf violet P, Grass triggerplant P, Woollyheads O  
Narrow rock-fern O, Common onion-orchid O, Hop clover O  
Square cicendia O, Trailing speedwell O, Slender dock O  
Tiny flat-sedge O, Cranberry heath O, Tall bluebell O  
Hare's foot clover O, Red parrot-pea I, Water Ribbons F  
Maiden-hair fern F, Necklace Fern F, Austral Indigo F

Danthonia eriantha F, Poa Labillardieri F, Dog Wood F  
 Button everlasting S, Fibrous spear-grass S, Flatweed F  
 Blue pincushion IO, Common rice-flower O, Tall Sedge F  
 Common sunray O, Slender spear-grass S, White Clover F  
 Variable plantain F, Slender hop-bush F, Hop Clover D  
 Hundreds and Thousands F, Slender sun-orchid HFD, Yam O  
 Sweet bursaria D, Spur velliea D, Silvery hair-grass DH  
 Small pennywort H, Red box H, Many-flowered mat-rush D  
 Common mouse-ear chickweed H, Dense-flowered woodrush H  
 Red-anther wallaby grass HD, Sheep sorrel P, Candles D  
 Small St John's wort D, Yellow pennywort H, Messmate P  
 Capitata rush PO, Hooded caladenia P, Hyacinth orchid D  
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## FROM CASTLEMAINE UBA -

### JANUARY

- Wednesday 4th. Visit to Castlemaine Botanic Gardens.  
 Ern Perkins to show us significant trees. Meet at Main Gate. 10 a.m. Bring Lunch. B.B.Q. available.
- Friday 6th. Regular Coffee Morning.  
 Social Cuppa followed by Round Table Conference. Bring your own views of UTOPIA - an ideal society. Hosted by Brain Poidevin. 10 a.m. Continuing Education rooms, Templeton Street. (Note 10 a.m.)
- Monday 9th. Castlemaine Art Gallery.  
 Director Peter Perry will conduct a tour starting at 10 a.m. Meet at the Gallery.
- Wednesday 11th. Melbourne Botanic Gardens Trip  
 Train leaves Castlemaine 7.15 a.m., or meet group at flower clock in St.Kilda Road at 9.30 a.m. Take lunch.
- Monday 16th. Keith Bottomley will be practising on the pipe organ at the Anglican Church - cnr Forest/Kennedy Street at 7 p.m. and will be happy to have us there with him. Bring your tea to eat in Victory Gardens (unless its raining.) At the Church at 7 p.m.
- Wednesday 18th. Pat Lokey at the Castlemaine Library will talk to us about new and interesting books available to borrowers. 10 a.m. at Library.
- Monday 23rd. Our own "Love or Money". Bring no more than 2 treasures to show the panel. Helen Poidevin, Felix Cappy and Pat Rankine. At Continuing Education rooms, Templeton St. 2p.m.
- Wednesday 25th. Picnic at Daylesford Wombat Gardens. Meet Forest St. end of Market Car Park at 10 a.m. Seats available in private cars. Bring lunch.

### FEBRUARY

- Wednesday 1st. Bendigo Art Gallery Director is planning a tour around the collection, showing us some of their notable works. Meet Forest St. end of Market Car Park. 10 a.m. Share private cars. NOTIFY MARY THOMPSON 722118 IF ATTENDING. (We need to book our party in some days ahead.)
- Friday 3rd. Coffee Morning Social cuppa again 10.30 a.m. at Continuing Education rooms, Templeton Street.

*Visitors welcome!*

## CASTLEMAINE F.N.C. AGENDA

Fri 9 Dec. MEMBERS AND VISITORS NIGHT. High School,  
Lawson Pde at 8.00 p.m. Bring a plate.

Sat 10 Dec. FYERS RIDGE EXCURSION. See the late spring  
flowers on the ridge road. Leader R. Mills. Leave SEC,  
Mostyn St at 1.30 p.m. sharp.

Thurs 26 Jan. BUSINESS MEETING. 38 Campbell Street at  
7.30 p.m. This is the first meeting of the year.

Fri 10 Feb. CENTRAL AUSTRALIA and the NORTH. Speaker is  
Frank Duffin. High School at 8.00 p.m. Annual meeting.

Sat 11 Feb. TULLAROOP DAM. Leave S.E.C., Mostyn St at  
3.00 p.m. sharp, and take a picnic tea and your  
binoculars. Final details will depend on weather, and  
will be arranged at the Friday meeting.

Fri 10 March. RECLAMATION OF MINED AREAS.  
Speaker is Ian Higgins. Bring items for our display at  
V.F.N.C.A. campout.

Mar 11-13 OCEAN GROVE CAMPOUT at Uniting Church camp.  
\$16 per day, including 3 meals. Marine biology cruise  
in conjunction with Marine Studies Centre personnel  
(approx. 5 hours on Port Phillip and Swan Bays), beach  
walk, rock shelf walk, mangrove swamps, walk on Edwards  
Point, snorkelling with the seals, discovering the  
Ocean Grove Nature Reserve etc. The boat trip and  
snorkelling are optional, and will cost approx. \$15  
each. A joint WVFNCA and VFNCA campout. Mark it in your  
diary.

Fri 14 April. ORCHIDS with Gary Cheers.

Sept 8-9 W.V.F.N.C.A. campout at Castlemaine

Oct 21-23 W.V.F.N.C.A. campout at Creswick

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CASTLEMAINE F.N.C. Inc. P.O. Box 324, Castlemaine 3450.

Committee: George Broadway (Pres), Barbara Maund (Sec),  
Maggie Oliver (VP), Rita Mills (Newsletter), Kaye Turner  
(Program Sec), Ern Perkins (Treas), Margaret Dunne,  
Geoff Sitch, Robyn Holden, Gunter Liebl, Elma Kelly.  
Librarian: Lesley Perkins.

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